

# ANARCHIST LABOR BULLETIN

Formerly The Seditonist  
Number 12  
August 14 75c



A Publication of the Anarchist Labor Network

## Without Borders: 1989 Anarchist Conference

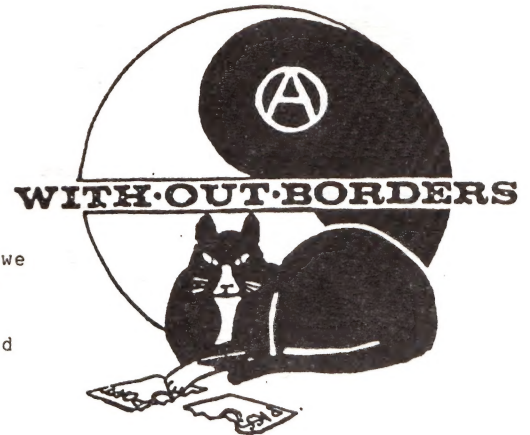
Somewhere in the neighborhood of 2000 people showed up for this year's North American Anarchist Conference. Attendance figures continue the pattern of nearly doubling each year. The continual increase in attendees is ample proof that we are reaching more and more people every year. How many of these people are fully aware of even the most basic anarchist principles is still at question (as shown in the Day of Action fiasco after the conference) but hopefully workshops on the basic fundamentals of anarchism (as were offered this year) will help alleviate this problem. As a movement, ( and I think it is now safe to speak in

terms of an Anarchist Movement) we have always attracted a certain number of violence-prone individuals (usually young men suffering from unfocused anger and hostility). In the past the ignorant and ill-conceived 'actions' of such people have served the state in discrediting the anarchist movement, which by it's very nature (advocating mutual aid, peace, and cooperation) uses violence only in self-defense. Given the incidents of sexism and homophobia at this years conference, it's clear that some of the people calling themselves anarchists need to learn some basic lessons about solidarity and respect.

## ANARCHIST NEWSPAPER PROJECT

The long-awaited continental anarchist newspaper appears to be moving along steadily. A second prototype issue, "Writing on the Wall", was distributed at this year's conference. It contained many stories relating to workers struggles plus a "revolutionary year in review" which highlighted actions and uprisings of interest to anarchists. It also contained some ideas on what the newspaper should be, as well as a rough draft of a statement of principles that seemed a good start toward something bigger. There was the expected opposition, with both the people at the Fifth Estate and Jon Bekken of Libertarian Labor Review (strange bedfellows indeed) questioning the wisdom of the effort. Jon Bekken went so far as to circulate a flier at the

conference wondering if the people from the RSL, who are working on the project, might be on a "recruiting mission" within the anarchist movement. He singled out THE SEDITIONIST for our advocacy of the project, calling us "naive" for believing we can work with former Trotskyists. He posed the question: "Have Anarchists forgotten their principles?" Well, Mr. Bekken, if our principles are supposed to include condemning people for their past Marxist affiliations, trying to disrupt and sabotage projects aimed at bringing anarchist ideas to a broader segment of the population, and generally having a piss poor attitude about everything, then yes, we have "forgotten" those principles, WITH PLEASURE. If our movement is to exclude everyone with a past



association with Marxism, we might as well exclude everyone with a past association with capitalism, and so we might as well exclude everyone who is not an anarchist RIGHT NOW!. The people of the RSL have still got some baggage to lose, but I for one, as "naive" as I am, feel they are doing alright. I'm happy to have them in the anarchist movement. I have personally spoken with people from the RSL and I believe they are sincere. The entire Revolutionary Socialist League did not suddenly convert to anarchism. That is why they are disbanding, to allow members with Marxist-Leninist beliefs to affiliate with other groups or form a new "party". I think we have more important things to worry about than "Marxist infiltrators", such as our own tendency to engage in petty bickering and self-destructive infighting. When we have real disputes in regards to principles and direction, these should be debated until they are resolved, or at least until both positions get their say.

CONFERENCE REPORT  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



# ANARCHIST LABOR NETWORK

One of the most positive things to come out of this year's conference was the formation of the Anarchist Labor Network. This network will hopefully get anarchist unionists working together on projects of mutual concern and sharing advice and information. This Bulletin will be published monthly and will serve as a means of communication for the network. It is the goal of the Anarchist Labor Network to facilitate mutual aid and support among activists and organizers. This is, to the best of our knowledge, the first opportunity for anarcho-syndicalists in the IWW and WSA to actually cooperate and share information on a (hopefully!) large scale. I look forward to working with local Wobs as well as unaffiliated anarchist unionists in spreading the word about self-management and workers control.

All in all the conference was a very pleasurable experience. It is ALWAYS good to see anarchists at work, cooperating and pulling off something on a large scale. There was a good mix of relevant workshops and discussion groups as well as frivolous and fun things. Despite a few ugly incidents, most people seemed to get along. I saw people who were blood enemies in the pages of their respective journals chatting and schmoozing like old comrades. There were children in their mother's arms and people in their seventies. You could smell the breath of freedom in the air as people, forced to restrain their desires and beliefs by the conformity of everyday life, suddenly cut loose. It all worked. People got fed. People discussed. Contacts were made. It happened. And it happened well. I'll always remember it.

## Day of action report : SIX DAYS OF ACTION ONE DAY OF IDIOCY

Coming on the heels of an extremely productive and encouraging conference, it was too depressing to believe. Suffice it to say that the worst fears of those who opposed the Day of Action were realized. The capitalist press, which had been excluded from the conference (for whatever reason) wasn't allowed to report on the cooperation and hard work that went on during those six days. But the day after the conference, when the shit went down in Berkeley, the newspapers were alive with reports of the "anarchist rampage". Photos of anarchists dragging a man from his delivery truck, busting windows out of small stores, and generally acting like over-excited assholes, filled the pages.

# THE 24hr STRIKE

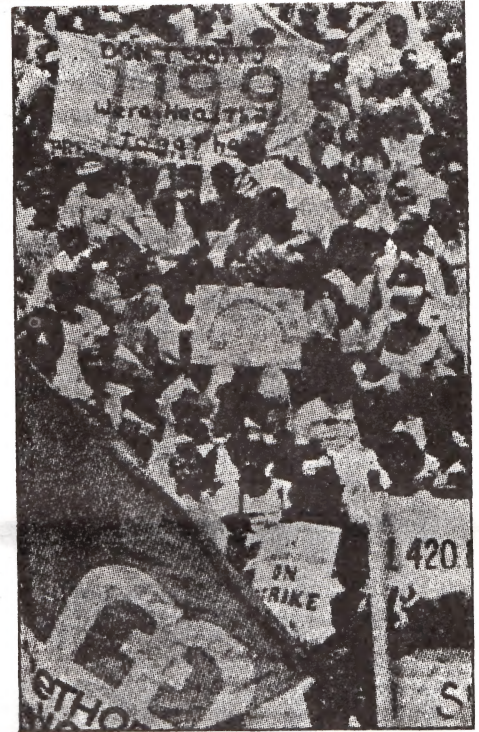
On July 24th 34000 members of Local 1199 Health and Hospital workers hit the streets of New York carrying signs which read: "We Won't Bow Down To The Bosses!" "Down With The Bosses, Up With The Union!" and "Housekeepers Won't Take No Sheet!" The turnout was one of the largest union marches New York has ever seen. This march highlighted the second of three planned ONE DAY STRIKES, a new tactic from the working class arsenal that has seldom (if ever) been used in this country.

The dispute involves management's refusal to negotiate a fair contract with the 40000 hospital and nursing home workers, who have been working without a contract since June 30th. Issues include wages, benefits and conditions. The use of the 24hr strike allows the workers to bleed management without taking any real harm themselves.

The mood was festive among the thousands of marchers. Multilingual chants and songs of workers struggle blended with salsa and samba rhythms as they crowded through the streets.

Local 1199 president Dennis Rivera stated: "We're going to continue this fight until they give us a

contract." After this strong show of unity and support, there is little doubt that they will.



The Action (as planned) was supposed to involve some form of helping the homeless. Supposedly an abandoned hotel in downtown Berkeley was to be seized and used as a homeless squat. The fact that the city of Berkeley was already in the process of converting the building into a residential hotel FOR THE HOMELESS seems to have been lost on the "organizers". In any case, an attempt to scout out the building the night before was busted by the cops, so they were there in full force when the "anarchists" arrived.

Previous to this a relatively peaceful march and demonstration had taken place in the center of San Francisco. Food was distributed to the homeless people who were gathered in front of City Hall. After this march, the people got on the BART and headed for the East Bay and Berkeley. By this time the group of 250 SF demonstrators had swelled to something like 500 people, all calling themselves anarchists. It was apparent by the time the events in Berkeley began that most of these people had come to the conference for the expressed purpose of raising some hell. How little control over the situation the DOA committee had was obvious. This action, supposedly in support of the homeless, saw incidents where the homeless people of Berkeley banded together WITH THE POLICE to protect themselves from the "rampaging anarchists". In one incident, homeless people and the police defended the Homeless Cafe set up in People's Park against

people who were calling themselves anarchists and who apparently wanted to wreck it. Another incident had people calling themselves anarchists pulling a driver from a Coca Cola truck (after busting out the windshield with him inside) and seizing the truck and destroying it's contents. There were some reports that the people who pulled this man from his truck called him "nigger" as they dragged him out. They called themselves anarchists.

Some people who actually participated in this debacle told stories of how these brave young macho-macho anarchists did battle with the cops. The most militant actions (tossing coke cans at the pigs) were carried out by the youngest and strongest male "anarchists". They were often surrounded by other people who had come to Berkeley thinking that some sort of intelligent protest was planned. When the cops would turn on these brave young macho-macho anarchists they would turn tail and flee, leaving behind those weaker and slower to be arrested and carted off to jail. Brave young streetfighters indeed.

Needless to say, I am eager to hear what excuse these people have for their behavior. What they did (on a local level at least) was negate six days of productive work just to get their rocks off by throwing soda pop at cops. This brings up some serious questions. First and foremost being, do we need a Day of Action during every continental conference? If we do, should the planning for this Day of Action be left in the hands of a few people? Shouldn't the general assembly of



# Gay Community Forms Self Defense Group

In response to a growing number of hate crimes directed against the gay community in San Francisco, local activists have banded together to form the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Self Defense Institute. The institute offers people training in pacifist and non-pacifist methods of self defense, including fire arms and other lethal weapons.

"When people use violence against you, you have the right to respond in any way that is effective," said institute director John Wahl. "This is a college where people learn all the ways necessary to survive."

Recent incidents of physical assault and psychological warfare directed at gays and lesbians have included vandalism, threatening letters and phone calls, as well as actual physical attack.

There is growing fear that these attacks are part of an organized wave of terror coordinated by such fascists as Tom Metzger of W.A.R. (White Aryan Resistance) and his nazi skinheads. On July 28th, 200 gays lesbians and their supporters marched through the Haight hunting for nazi skinheads. The skinheads were reportedly gathering on Haight Street to confront the demonstration, but when the marchers came up the street the skinheads scattered like the cowards they are. Organizers of the GLB Defense Institute say they will not tolerate any more oppression. "We're saying to these skinheads: 'God help you, because we are coming after you'". The GLB Defense Institute can be contacted at 1525 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA. 94106.



**We won! These workers at the Cox Creek copper refinery in Baltimore won union recognition, back pay and reinstatement after being fired for union activity in January. They had maintained a solid picket line since Jan. 26 and had gained the solidarity of the community and local unions.**

Photo: UE News

## THE THREE "C's": COURTS/COMPANY/CAPITALISM

Eastern Airlines filed a reorganization plan with federal bankruptcy court on July 21st. The plan was backed by the companies creditors-but makes no provision for the striking workers who built and ran the airline. Bankruptcy judge Burton Lifland okayed the company's request to withdraw \$75 million from an escrow account to continue operations-but NOT to pay striking attendants, pilots and machinists who have been on the picket line for 5 months. Continental Airlines, Eastern's parent company, announced plans to buy \$2.5 billion worth of jets from Boeing-but still maintained they

didn't have enough money to meet strikers demands. Further proving his loyalty to his corporate masters, Judge Lifland issued a restraining order against strikers, barring them from making statements or carrying placards that questioned the airlines safety, a clear violation of their rights of free speech, as well as a blatant overstepping of his authority as a bankruptcy judge.

But despite the obvious collusion between the courts and capital, the strike is still holding firm. Pilots recently rejected a company proposal that would have allowed only 1400 of 3400 striking pilots to return to work. The struggle continues.

## DAY OF ACTION REPORT CONTINUED FROM PG. 2

the conference attendees decide on these matters? The ineptitude of the DOA planning committee resulted in most of the 30 people arrested being without bail money or attorneys. Is it fair to subject an already oppressed group such as the homeless to the increased brutality of the police just so a few people can feel like Real Revolutionaries? Can the anarchist movement afford the negative publicity meted out by the capitalist press over such "actions"?

First of all, I don't think it is possible to plan a street action. The best, and most successful always seem to be spontaneous. The action in Berkeley was, on the other hand, planned for almost a year. It was a concerted effort at provocation. This should be said up front: it was designed to confront and provoke the police into taking action AGAINST the Action. No doubt the "organizers" hoped to present the world with a picture of brave anarchists going toe to toe with the oppressive forces of the state. It didn't happen that way. Most people saw it as the police defending the community (including the homeless) from violent elements imported from out of town to destroy some property. Many people in the area who were borderline sympathetic to the ideals of anarchism are no doubt questioning that sympathy. All the worst lies of the capitalist press were proven true (to them) by the events in Berkeley. "Anarchists are committed to violence and destruction"; "Anarchists would plunge society into chaos"; etc. Those of us advocating organized resistance against the state, using violence only in self-defense, find ourselves explaining that anarchism is not chaos, wild-eyed criminals and crazy thugs will not run rampant in the streets, the world will not be plunged into a new dark age...etc. It is very depressing. It also wastes the precious time and resources of a mere handful of people. Why?

In this city we have enough problems with the police attacking peaceful demonstrations. YOU DON'T NEED TO PROVOKE THESE BASTARDS! You can just let them go on their own. If our demonstrations are attacked, then we should fight. We don't need this macho-macho bullshit. Groups devoted to militant action will find that they have plenty to do just DEFENDING peaceful demonstrations. For right now that should be plenty. Such groups should adopt a defense mode and forget the provocations. Self Defense Groups might prove indispensable for the anarchist movement in the near future. Provocateurs are as useless now as they always have been (except to the forces of the state who make handy work of them).

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE IS  
SEPT. 4th  
IN ISSUE 13:  
ORGANIZING AND THE LAW  
VDT HEALTH HAZARDS  
PLUS MUCH MORE!**



# Class War in the Coal Fields



## U.S.

The strike of UMW coal miners, on since April 5th, is still going strong. The courts and the capitalists have done their best to break it, but it won't be broke. Thus far over one trillion (!) dollars in fines have been levied against the union. The determination of the government (in the form of the courts and the NLRB) and the capitalists (who control the government) has been met with the determination and fierce commitment of the miners to WIN THIS BATTLE. Plans are in motion to enlarge the strike officially, to sanction the solidarity shown by the 42,000 miners who "unofficially" walked off their jobs in June. Even staid union bureaucrats are beginning to realize the importance of the struggle. Their denunciation of the wildcat strikes, the most inspiring show of workers solidarity that many of us have ever seen, indicated the depths to which the "official" labor movement has sunk. But now, even THEY see the life-or-death nature of this fight. The courts have beggared the UMW, no doubt about it. But the miners are not knuckling under! Support is

### S.F. NURSES STRIKE CONTINUES

Nurses at San Francisco's Children's Hospital continue their strike against unsafe conditions and poor pay. Local media have thrown their weight behind the hospital management, continuing to run stories expressing "concern" for the safety of patients, despite the fact that most of the hospital's patients have been transferred to other facilities, and scabs have been imported from out of state to take care of the rest.

Most of the local "alternative media" has been silent on the strike, being too preoccupied with restaurant reviews, film and music reviews, and generally worshipping the Capitalist God In Their Own Way.

We encourage all interested supporters to contact: California Nurses Association, (415) 864-4141 and find out how you can help.

coiming into Virginia and West Virginia from all across the land. Supporters and union militants are pouring into Camp Solidarity in Carterton, VA., a site set aside for workers from out of the area who wish to help with picket duty or in the acts of civil disobedience. Miners on the picket lines are becoming more militant. Company trucks are being pelted with stones. In Boomer County, miners crossed into a company compound and escorted some hired goons to the nearest road and told them to pick a direction and take off. Rumors abound that preparations are being made to continue the struggle IN WHATEVER FORM IT TAKES. This country is afire with strikes, communications workers, miners, transport workers, service workers, and more, hundreds of thousands are out on the line, fighting for their lives and for their class. UMW president Richard Trumka sounded the battle cry when he said: "If we aren't successful, if justice and legal redress are totally denied here, I submit to you that from the crumbled blocks will arise a new movement—just like it did in 1890...just like it did in 1910...just like it did in 1920...just like it did in the 1940's...It came back, and it will come back again. But when it comes back, I think the form of union will probably be different. It's tolerance for injustice will be far less, it's willingness to alibi for a system that we know doesn't work will be non-existent."

Your support, in whatever form you can give it, is needed now. Write to: UMW District 28, POB 28, Castlewood, VA. 24224

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Sept. 9th  
The San Francisco Labor Council (AFL-CIO) will be sponsoring a conference on ORGANIZING in the SF Bay Area. The Conference will run from 9:30 am to 3:30pm and will be held at the SF Community College District Bldg. at 33 Gough St (one block south of Market). Workshops will include ORGANIZING THE UNORGANIZED, POLITICAL ACTION ORGANIZING, and COMMUNITY/LABOR COALITION WORK.



## U.S.S.R.

Soviet coal miners, like their brothers and sisters in the U.S., rose up against the oppression of the state and it's bureaucrats on July 11th. 500,000 miners across the Soviet Union joined together to fight the "bosses" (this time commissars) in a massive national strike that rocked the halls of the Kremlin. Russia hasn't seen this kind of rebellion since 1917.

Issues in the Soviet miners strike were basic: better living standards, abolishing the many "freewheeling entrepreneurs" who have been amassing fortunes under Gorbachev, independent unions, and SELF-MANAGEMENT.

The Soviet bureaucrats scrambled quickly to settle the strike. They promised an increase in the amount of consumer goods, as well as limited local autonomy. Seeing how quickly the bureaucrats caved in, and apparently amazed at their own strength (they could have probably gotten anything they wanted) the miners agreed to the terms. But they have flexed a muscle and found it strong. Where they have ventured, they will go again, and others will follow.

Psss...did you hear that Bill's new secretary is really "gung-ho" about her job?



That's incredible! She seemed so normal!!!!

**OFFICE WORKERS UNITED**

**P.O. BOX 210095  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA**

**94121-0095**



# Workplace Organizing

During the conference there were a lot of questions raised at various workshops over basic organizing tactics. For the most part these questions were not answered. It is for that reason that we will try to present some very basic information in this and future issues of the ALB, information related to approaches, legalities, and just general experiences. Anyone out there reading this who has some hot tips, advice or stories to tell, please send them in.

## STEP ONE: Deciding to organize

This may seem silly, but I'm going to try to reduce my own experiences down to some kind of simple formula that might be reproduceable elsewhere. Step one is probably the easiest. That involves just deciding you want to try to organize your workplace. By the time you get to step one you should already have a good idea about what's wrong where you work, and which of your co-workers you can trust. If you have found nothing wrong, or if you don't work with anybody you can trust, you won't need to worry about any of the other steps.

## STEP TWO: Gathering the organizing group

If you've made it to step two, you'll want to start building an organizing group. If you work with a relatively small number of people, you can pretty much function as your own organizing group. Just talk to the people you work with. If you have made the decision to organize, then there must be some problems in the workplace. Find out how people feel about these problems. Discuss how these problems could be solved. The tag line on most of these solutions will be: "Too bad we're not able to do anything about it." This is when you start proposing the possibility of collective action. If NO ONE wants to pursue this possibility, then you're stuck. If ANYONE agrees with you and wants to help organize, then you're on your way.

## STEP THREE: Spreading the word

For legal purposes, you have to decide on a "Bargaining Unit". This should include all people you work with who do the same or similar work. The bargaining unit we are currently working with in OFFICE WORKERS UNITED is the job classification Clerical-Technical Workers. This is a suitably broad category. For NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) recognition you need to convince at least thirty percent of your defined bargaining unit that collective action is the best way to go.

(This thirty percent should be viewed as A MINIMUM however, and as such it should be largely ignored; experience has shown that we should shoot for AT LEAST 60-70% of the defined bargaining unit)

If you work in a small office or business, the best way to do this is to talk to each of your brothers and sisters separately or in small groups. Needless to say, as of step one you should be well aware of who the office snitches and company sucks are. These people you should avoid like the plague. It won't take long for the bosses to find out you're organizing, but you should postpone their finding out as long as you can. If you work in a large office or business, some form of flier will probably be necessary. These fliers should be circulated to all workers and they should include a method of contacting the organizing group (a mail drop, neutral address, or P.O. Box) plus a short summary of your goals and grievances. The bosses will read these, so don't tip your whole hand. If you give them the chance to address your grievances before you're organized they can do it to their own advantage without any input from you and your fellow workers. Keep the fliers basic but strong.

## STEP FOUR: Process

Somewhere during step three you'll have to decide how decisions are going to be made. You should have actually been thinking of this all along. What you want is a rank and file-controlled union based on direct democracy and devoid of bureaucracy. As soon as you gather your core organizing group you should meet and rough out some sort of working constitution. In a small office or business it may not seem as important to delegate responsibilities and tasks, or even to establish clear channels of communication. You can all just meet and talk among yourselves. In larger groups this may be impossible except in unusual circumstances (even in large groups you should plan periodic general assemblies and gatherings to decide major issues). But some means of making decisions will be necessary no matter what size group you have. You will also want to consider what kind of dues structure (if any) you wish to have. Keep in mind that things cost money. NLRB elections cost money. Printing costs money. Strikes cost A LOT of money. You may also want to consider choosing officers and delegates, all elected to limited terms and subject to immediate recall. Matters of consensus versus majority vote will have to be debated within your own group. Whatever you decide, you have to realize that you are facing a highly organized enemy.

## STEP FIVE: To affiliate or not to affiliate

Somewhere in the process, perhaps at the very beginning, the question will come up of whether or not to affiliate with a larger group. There are plenty of pros and cons involved. On the plus side, at the very least you will have the comfort of knowing you're a part of a larger body of the working class.

In some cases this might even make various resources available to you (printing, legal, etc.) although this is not always the case. If you do decide to affiliate you should definitely look at some very specific things. What responsibilities will you have in regards to your parent union? How much of your dues will go to the parent union? How much freedom will you have? What is the history of the union you are considering joining? What have they done lately for the working class? There are some good unions scattered around the country. The Industrial Workers of the World are a fine example (see regional contact lists in this issue). In any case, this is something you'll have to decide with your fellow workers. Whatever you decide, you should make an effort to stay on at least cordial relations with the existing unions in your area, since they might help you whether you choose to join them or not.

I realize this is pretty scattered and kind of off the cuff. Different situations will require different methods of approach. Still, I at least hope it starts the creative juices flowing.

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San Francisco, CA.  
94121-0095

## I.M.W.U. CONTACT LIST: (CONTINUED FROM PG. 6)

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89101

### TENNESSEE

IMWU Knoxville, 701 Hardwick Rd.,  
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### VIRGINIA

IMWU Salem, 1918 Tucker Lane,  
Salem, 24153

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### PHILIPPINES

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6450 Hanau, W. Germany



# Workers Solidarity Alliance



**U.S. Section of the  
International  
Workers Association**

## Industrial Workers of the World



### CANADA

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**- Vancouver GMB,  
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Vancouver, B.C. V5N 5K5. CANADA  
**ONTARIO**- IWW, Toronto GMB, 26a  
Oxford St., 2nd Flr., Toronto, ONT.  
M5T 1N9, CANADA

### GREAT BRITAIN

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Heslington Road, York, YO 5BQ,  
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San Diego IWW Group, PO BOX 191224,  
San Diego, 92119

**COLORADO**- Denver/Boulder GMB, 2412  
E. Colfax Ave., Denver, 80206

**GEORGIA**- Atlanta IWW Group, PO BOX  
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WSA San Francisco Group, PO BOX  
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WSA San Diego, PO BOX 8362, San  
Diego, 92102

### INDIANA

WSA Indiana, c/o Nicholas Keirn,  
2431 Trentman Ave, Fort Wayne,  
46806

### IOWA

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Souix Rapids, 50585

### MASSACHUSETTS

WSA Massachusetts, PO BOX 1753,  
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**MARYLAND**- Baltimore Area GMB, PO  
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**MASSACHUSETTS**- Boston Area GMB,  
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Berkshire Learning Center Job  
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People's Warehouse IU 660 Job  
Branch, 727 W. Ellsworth, Ann  
Arbor, 48104  
Grand Rapids IWW Group, PO Box 211,  
Comstock Park, 49321  
Ann Arbor Tenants Union, 4001  
Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, 48109

**MINNESOTA**- Minneapolis/St. Paul  
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**OHIO**- SW Ohio GMB, PO Box 26381,  
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SW Ohio General Defense Committee,  
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45699, Lucasville, 45699-0001

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Kernel, Houston, 77087

**VIRGINIA**- Keith Preston, 1101 W.  
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### TEXAS

WSA Texas, c/o PO BOX 1197, San  
Antonio, 78294

### WASHINGTON

WSA Washington, c/o Arthur J.  
Miller, 302 N. J. St. #3, Tacoma,  
98403

### WEST VIRGINIA

WSA West Virginia, PO BOX 2764,  
Charleston, 25330

**WASHINGTON**- Bellingham GMB, Box  
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Seattle GMB, 3238 33rd Ave South,  
Seattle, 98144  
Spokane IWW Group, PO BOX 1273,  
Spokane, 99210  
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\*GMB= General Membership Branch



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91416-6283  
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Davis, 95616

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06897

### MINNESOTA

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